

# NEW JERSEY MILITIA NEWSLETTER

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*All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.*

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

## Soft Law & Hard Law

By Tom Farrenkopf

A day doesn't pass that somewhere in the world a meeting isn't held under UN auspices that doesn't plot to transform our hard won liberty as free men and women into privileges granted (or withheld) by a UN-created Charter. Lately the UN has been promoting "global governance," two main aspects of which deal with disarming you and taxing you. The danger of global governance is graver than some want to believe, and none of us can afford to watch this out of the corner of our eye anymore. When I say this, I'm as serious as a heart attack!

What are the mechanics of converting rights into privileges? As a former president of a second amendment organization I had the opportunity to speak to different organizations about our rights. Gun control and land control are like two yolks in one egg, so I often discussed the environmental movement as it relates to gun control.

In making preparations to speak to a local organization, I came across a speech delivered by former Soviet dictator Mikhail Gorbachev to an organization promoting global governance. His topic was the UN "Earth Charter" which is one of the major pillars of global governance. What he said was cryptic and instantly piqued my attention.

Essentially what he said was, in order to make the Earth Charter a reality it would be necessary to move quickly from "soft law" to "hard law". Never having heard these terms before, but understanding Gorbachev and his Commie pals, I began to research their meaning. The following definitions come from Professor Ruud Lubbers, professor of Globalization at Harvard University. If

you are going to understand the septic content spewing from the UN and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in league with their piracy, and educate others about their shenanigans, these Orwellian definitions are extremely important:

"Soft law - Agreements on principles with little official legal security. Often these agreements are laid down in declarations, charters, and so forth that reflect ethical conceptions that have not yet found their way into law. **Soft law is becoming important, since judges are starting to use soft law principles as a basis for their rulings.** (emphasis mine) The development of soft law has been strongly stimulated by a number of global conferences and summits, like the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, the Social Summit in Copenhagen, the Women conference in Beijing and the conference on Demography in Cairo.

"Hard Law - Also called 'Paper Law'. National or international legal principles based on laws, jurisprudence or treaties with a high degree of legal security. This is how, for example, human rights evolved. Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these rights have been hard law. Hard law is based on a constitution and realized with consent (or on initiative) of parliament. International treaties become hard law after they have been ratified by parliament."

Reading these "legal" definitions that the pointy-headed professor provides us with reminds me of why the ideal depth to bury a lawyer is 20 feet plus. Because deep down, they're really nice! It also gives reason why we commit to the practice of keeping our powder dry - and handy. At this very moment these global elitists

are meeting somewhere in this world (in very expensive conference rooms with chandeliers, I might add) discussing new ways for you to live with these definitions in mind. By way of example, The Development and Peace Foundation, located in Bonn, Germany, held a policy forum in May, 2002. One of the workshops was, *Global Legal Arrangements In Comparison*. Here is a quote from the forums program brochure: "But... we cannot speak of 'elements of a global constitution'.... **Interim solutions like "soft law" associated with voluntary commitments have often proven to be highly attractive alternatives to instruments of international law.**" (emphasis mine)

The key words in the above are, "interim solutions". In other words, let's give the rabble a little time to get used to the corral until we close them in with the gate of "hard law". Let's examine a quote from Gorbachev himself and you will see how cleverly they move you and your rights towards the global governance corral. Gorbachev has never stopped promoting a communist one world government ever since his days as president of the Soviet Union. One of his activities has been promoting global governance through his Green Cross organization.

On Dec. 12, 2000 Gorbachev told the Swiss Parliament, "It is also a time for non-governmental organizations such as Green Cross to play more active roles in facilitating environmental cleanup, **safe weapons destruction**, (emphasis mine) constructive peacekeeping and peacemaking, democratization, and international mediation between former Cold War enemies. Governments -- and I can personally attest to this -- find themselves bound oftentimes by Cold

War ghosts, customs, and bureaucracies, whereas NGO's can be more flexible, timely, and nimble in affecting positive change." What do you suppose Gorby means by "safe weapons destruction". Follow the events at the UN Gun Control Forum July 7-11, 2003, and you will have a pretty good idea. The link between the environmental movement and gun control is also demonstrated. You might ask, "How does International Green Cross have such influence on what takes place at the UN? Because the United Nations has awarded Green Cross International their highest accreditation status, i.e. "NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations". Make no mistake. These NGO's will be very influential in implementing global governance when (if) it becomes fully implemented. As I can't point out often enough, the only thing dead about communism is its' victims.

A perfect example of "soft law" was demonstrated when the Pentagon responded to an inquiry by a patriotic individual about allowing Americans to purchase surplus firearms from the government. In part, the reply from the Pentagon dated June 22, 2003, reads: **"...the United States is party to a number of international agreements which would make the action you request problematic."** The high and mighty has spoken. We certainly don't want to upset the apple cart by requesting anything that is "problematic", do we!? This letter in total can be read at, <http://www.guned.com>. An excellent commentary on this may also be read at <http://libertybelles.org>. Every facet of liberty is being wrapped in a global governance web starting out under the guise of "soft law". The above example drives home the point. Treachery and treason have brought us to this state of affairs. If past performance is any indication, we can expect global taxation and global gun control to be in our future in the form of "hard law".

Can this lava flow be stopped? Perhaps. In my opinion this means that air gun shooters must quickly back up the 50 caliber shooters and every caliber in between must do the same. These varmints won't rest until they have confiscated all weapons of self-defense and just for good measure your kid brother's pea shooter! Also, the creation of strategies aimed at countering this international threat must

be addressed commensurate with the climate each of us live in. Here in Montana, it does not present much of a challenge to keep our senators and one representative in line. Conversely, God help all of you in New York and California as you work to sort this out. If these efforts are not moved on quickly, gangrene will have its way with our Republic.

### 'This Is Not Right'

DES MOINES - Cecilia Beaman is a 57-year-old grandmother, a principal at Pacific Middle School in Des Moines, and is also a suspected terrorist.

"This is not right," she said. It's not right!"

This past weekend she and several other chaperones took 37 middle school students to a band competition in California.

During the stay she made sandwiches for the kids and was careful to pack the knives she used to prepare those sandwiches in her checked luggage. She says she even alerted security screeners that the knives were in her checked bags and they told her that was OK.

But Beaman says she couldn't find a third knife. It was a 5 1/2 inch bread knife with a rounded tip and a serrated edge. She thought she might have lost it.

On the trip home, screeners with the Transportation Security Administration at Los Angeles International Airport found it deep in the outside pocket of a carry-on cooler. Beaman apologized and told them it was a mistake.

"You've committed a felony," Beaman says a security screener announced. "And you're considered a terrorist."

Beaman says she was told her name would go on a terrorist watch-list and that she would have to pay a \$500 fine.

"I'm a 57-year-old woman who is taking care of 37 kids," she told them. "I'm not gonna commit a terrorist act." Beaman says they took information from her driver's license and confiscated and photographed the knife according to standard operating procedure.

She says screeners refused to give her paperwork or documentation of her violation, documentation of the pending fine, or a copy of the photograph of the knife.

"They said 'no' and they said it's a national security issue. And I said what about my constitutional rights? And they said 'not at this point ... you don't have any'."

KOMO News did reach a spokesperson with the TSA for comment. They said they did not have record of Beaman's confrontation but did admit that TSA screeners are, by design, becoming more strict. Fines issued for knives and other sharp objects range from \$250 to \$1,500. Fines issued for firearms discovered in carry-on luggage range from \$1,500 to \$7,500.

The TSA web site also indicates firearms violations will be referred for potential criminal prosecution.

The same site does not propose the same criminal referral for knives like the one Cecilia Beaman was carrying.

"This is not the way my country should be treating me," she said. "My concern is that if that's the way they're treating American citizens I would hate to think how they're treating other people. It's crazy."

The TSA reminds travelers that it has the authority to impose civil penalties up to \$10,000 per violation.

-- June 1, 2005

### Maximum Pain is Aim of New U.S. Weapon

By David Hambling

The US military is funding development of a weapon that delivers a bout of excruciating pain from up to 2 kilometres [1.3 miles] away. Intended for use against rioters, it is meant to leave victims unharmed. But pain researchers are furious that work aimed at controlling pain has been used to develop a weapon. And they fear that the technology will be used for torture.

"I am deeply concerned about the ethical aspects of this research," says Andrew Rice, a consultant in pain medicine at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London, UK. "Even if the use of temporary severe pain can be justified as a restraining measure, which I do not believe it can, the long-term physical and psychological effects are unknown."

The research came to light in documents unearthed by the Sunshine Project, an organisation based in Texas and in Hamburg, Germany, that exposes biological weapons research. The papers were released under the

*In the beginning of change the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. – Mark Twain*

US's Freedom of Information Act.

One document, a research contract between the Office of Naval Research and the University of Florida, is entitled "Sensory consequences of electromagnetic pulses emitted by laser induced plasmas"

It concerns so-called Pulsed Energy Projectiles (PEPs), which fire a laser pulse that generates a burst of expanding plasma when it hits something solid, like a person (*New Scientist* print edition, 12 October 2002). The weapon, destined for use in 2007, could literally knock rioters off their feet.

According to a 2003 review of non-lethal weapons by the US Naval Studies Board, which advises the navy and marine corps, PEPs produced "pain and temporary paralysis" in tests on animals. This appears to be the result of an electromagnetic pulse produced by the expanding plasma which triggers impulses in nerve cells.

The new study, which will be carried out with researchers at the University of Central Florida, aims to optimise this effect. The idea is to work out how to generate a pulse which triggers pain neurons without damaging tissue.

The contract, heavily censored before release, asks researchers to look for "optimal pulse parameters to evoke peak nociceptor activation" - in other words, cause the maximum pain possible. Studies on cells grown in the lab will identify how much pain can be inflicted on someone before causing injury or death.

*New Scientist* contacted two researchers working on the project. Martin Richardson, a laser expert at the University of Central Florida, refused to comment. Brian Cooper, an expert in dental pain at the University of Florida, distanced himself from the work, saying "I don't have anything interesting to convey. I was just providing some background for the group." His name appears on a public list of the university's research projects next to the \$500,000-plus grant.

John Wood of University College London, UK, an expert in how the brain perceives pain, says the researchers involved in the project should face censure. "It could be used for torture," he says, "the researchers must be aware of this."

Amanda Williams, a clinical psychologist at University College London, fears that victims risk long-term harm. "Persistent pain can result from a range of supposedly non-destructive stimuli which nevertheless change the functioning of the nervous system," she says. She is concerned that studies of

cultured cells will fall short of demonstrating a safe level for a plasma burst. "They cannot tell us about the pain and psychological consequences of such a painful experience."

-- *The New Scientist*, 02 March 2005

### "A pool ...that never purifies"

ROME -- A judge has ordered best-selling author Oriana Fallaci to face trial on charges of defaming Islam in her recent book *The Strength of Reason*.

The case arose after Muslim activist Adel Smith charged that "some of the things she said are offensive to Islam." He cited a phrase from the book that refers to Islam as "a pool ... that never purifies."

Fallaci, who is in her 70s, said she is accused of violating an Italian law that prohibits "outrage to religion."

No date has been set for the trial to begin in the northern town of Bergamo.

Fallaci, a former resistance fighter and war correspondent who lives in New York, has often stirred controversy for her blunt publications and provocative stances. During her journalistic career, Fallaci became known for uncompromising interviews with such world leaders as former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

In the ruling obtained by the AP, the judge said that "Fallaci is addressing her hostile expressions against every manifestation of the Islamic religion and world and not only against certain extremist sectors."

Italy's Justice Minister, Roberto Castelli sided with Fallaci, telling Radio Padania that "Fallaci had the courage to say what she thinks."

"Religious sensitivity must be defended, but at the same time, the individual freedom to express one's own thought must be guaranteed," Castelli said.

-- AP, May 25, 2005

### Viewers Rave over *BATFE Fails the Test* Video

JPFO recently blindsided the Bureau of Alcohol, Taxation, Firearms and Explosives with the release of our documentary *BATFE Fails the Test*.

The shocking, never-meant-to-be-seen raw footage shows BATFE agents trying unsuccessfully to prove that a semi-automatic firearm had been deliberately modified to full-auto, in order to convict John Glover of a felony.

#### What Viewers Are Saying

"JPFO has produced a shocking and eye-opening DVD, *BATFE Fails the Test*. If you think you're safe from the BATFE just because you follow current gun laws, think again. Be sure and get a copy of this documentary so you can see exactly what your government can do to you just because you own a semi-automatic firearm."

Tim Schmidt

Publisher, Concealed Carry Magazine  
[www.concealedcarrymagazine.com](http://www.concealedcarrymagazine.com).

"*BATFE Fails the Test* is a must see DVD for all Americans. See our government at work. Watch as the 'government expert' turns a dangerously malfunctioning legal semi automatic rifle into an 'evil' machine gun and Mr. Glover into a 'Felon'. Watch as a 'real expert' (he actually must earn a living with his knowledge), examines the firearm and determines that it is merely a malfunctioning legal semi automatic rifle.

"It is an inside look rarely seen by most Americans and shows first hand the cavalier attitude of a federal agent and how it can force an innocent American into financial ruin. Watch out you may be next."

David M. McCleary

Attorney at Law

Waterford, MI

The BATFE's enforcement activities are authorized by the 1968 Gun Control Act. As JPFO has documented, the GCA was written by one Thomas Dodd, a career U.S. senator who **personally owned** a copy of the original German text of the Nazi Weapons Law ([www.jpfo.org/GCA\\_68.htm](http://www.jpfo.org/GCA_68.htm)). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the GCA language is eerily similar.

What has happened to John Glover - and, we're learning, to numerous others - is the end result of the US modeling laws after Nazi laws. Emulate a police state, become a police state.

#### Order on VHS or DVD

You can purchase a copy of the footage for \$17.76, postage paid, from JPFO. With your order you'll also receive, absolutely FREE, a copy of Gran'pa Jack #8 "Is America Becoming a Police State?" (a \$3.00 value) and your own personal copies of the BATFE confiscation report and Len Savage's expert witness report on the Glover case.

If you have a DVD player available, we strongly recommend that medium. The DVDs have a menu, designed with the assistance of GOA's

Larry Pratt, that lets you go right to the most crucial portions of the test and disassembly of the firearm without having to wade through raw footage. But whichever medium you choose, please order, watch, and **use** this tape. Your future - and the future of justice for gun owners -- could depend on it. -- Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership  
PO Box 270143  
Hartford, Wisconsin 53027  
Phone: 1-262-673-9745

## The Effect of the Gun Control Act of 1968

By a Massachusetts Patriot

"The government of the Union, then, is, emphatically and truly, a government of the people. In form and in substance it emanates from them. Its powers are granted by them, and are to be exercised directly on them, and for their benefit." -- *In Re Debs*, 158 US 564, 578 (1895)

All power is granted by the people to government, except -- according to the Gun Control Act of 1968 -- the power of the people to freely exercise the right of armed self-defense against criminals whether within or outside government.

'Twas not freedom of speech, or of the press of religion or any other right that allowed the establishment of this nation, but the right to keep and bear arms.

The very right used by the People to create this nation, is now denied to them by the very government We created.

Though we retain the right to keep and bear arms in defence of life and liberty, the mere government is (unlawfully) denying us the foundational right of this nation and People!

## New York Times Reporter a Government Informant

By Robert R. Raymond

March 26, 2004

Imagine: a journalist using his cover to inform on and demonize critics of the government! The Godfather had his "newspaper friends" on the payroll, and the IRS has theirs: the *New York Times'* David Cay Johnston.

Johnston reveals in his book, *Perfectly Legal*, that his informing led to tax audits, secret surveillance, and criminal prosecutions. Johnston gathered information on people in protest movements, uncovered the locations of their meetings, elicited the intentions of movement leaders, and

even tried to induce some of them to incriminate themselves.

Johnston also played a role as government public relations agent -- propagandizing from the front pages of the *Times* whenever the hardliners needed to generate publicity to prosecute disfavored political groups. (Not surprisingly, Johnston rose to fame during the Jayson Blair "see no evil, hear no evil" editorial leadership at the *Times*, when fictitious events were published as news.)

The second startling revelation comes from Johnston's open propagandizing. Johnston often cited mysterious "tax experts" for "legal" criticisms of political dissenters.

Masquerading as a muckraking journalist, Johnston conceals his true constituency: the hardliners within the tax police state who use him as their spokesperson, unbeknownst to his editors at the *Times*.

Johnston, who rode his coverage of the truth in taxation movement to a Pulitzer Prize, never mentions the millions of Americans questioning the suspect status of many tax laws and the deliberate shroud of obscurity covering those laws, the IRS banning the selling of books critical of the agency, the IRS prohibiting web sites critical of them, or the Silence Advocacy Project revealed in the prosecution of IRS whistleblower Joe Banister.

Instead, Johnston offers only one solution to the corrupt, abusive tax police state -- more money and more power to that tax police state. Johnston dips even lower, suggesting those who believe in financial privacy are Al-Queda sympathizers with blood on their hands from 9/11. Those who challenge imprisoning people for tax debts secretly support "white racist" organizations. Anyone who questions the tax police state is likely an anarchist bent on attacking the "commonwealth" of society itself. Even McCarthy made more sense than Johnston.

In sum, Johnston's book discloses the depths of a tax police state worthy only of Dante's Ninth circle of Hell -- the one reserved for those practiced in the sedition of sacred principles. Do they give out any special journalist prizes for the best government informant? (No IRS audits?) How about acting as an in-house public relations specialist for the state? (The Pravda award?) What about deceptive state propaganda? (The Goebbels prize?) I can think of at least one worthy nominee.

-- People for Truth in Taxation and The Free Labor Movement  
<http://www.raymond.org>  
<http://taxtyranny.blogspot.com/>  
Robert R. Raymond represents the People for Truth in Taxation Organization. He can be reached on his web site <http://www.raymond.org> or by e-mail at [rr@raymond.org](mailto:rr@raymond.org)

## Minuteman Project's Name Being Misused

What's in a name? Just ask Jim Gilchrist, the founder of the Minuteman Project. Gilchrist is frustrated that several organizations have set up Web sites that falsely imply they are affiliated with his border-watch group that patrolled the U.S.-Mexico border in April for illegal immigrants.

Gilchrist has posted a consumer-warning notice on his Web site, which reads: "The Minuteman Project is located in Aliso Viejo, California and maintains only one web site address: [www.minutemanproject.com](http://www.minutemanproject.com). Several groups have adopted the term 'minuteman' in their names. They are not part of the Minuteman Project."

Gilchrist's organization came under the national media spotlight, when hundreds of project volunteers spent a month patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border in Arizona. They peered through binoculars and talked on hand-held radios as they observed illegal immigrants crossing the border. Then the volunteers called in the U.S. Border Patrol to apprehend them.

They successfully completed their mission of drawing national attention to their cause and have received praise for their work from some quarters, but drew scorn from advocacy groups that defend the human rights of illegal immigrants. Late last month, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger ignited controversy when he praised the Minuteman Project's efforts in Arizona.

A consultant for the Minuteman Project said that officials with her organization are particularly concerned about one Web site, called the Minuteman Relief fund, which is soliciting donations.

"They have Web site links to us, and they are in no way affiliated with us," said media consultant Connie Hair.

Its Web site carries several articles on Gilchrist's group. One of the articles begins: "The Minuteman Project is a grassroots effort to bring Americans to the defense of their homeland, similar to the way the



original Minutemen from Massachusetts (and other U.S. colonies) did in the late 1700s. Like them, we want to bring to this effort only what few personal possessions we can carry ... plus our heart, mind and spirit."

The Web site also says: "Contributions of any size, large or small, are very helpful and very appreciated."

Officials with [www.minutemanrelieffund.org](http://www.minutemanrelieffund.org) could not be reached for comment.

Other Web sites also are using the name Minuteman Project without Gilchrist's permission, Hair said. Two of them are parodies.

One uses the same name as Gilchrist's Web site, but with a hyphen between the words minuteman and project.

The parody Web site [www.minuteman-project.com](http://www.minuteman-project.com) mocked the number of volunteers for the project, which was aiming to recruit about 1,000 people. And while organizers reported they had nearly hit their goal, with about 900 total volunteers, some media organizations reported that more reporters than volunteers showed up for the border watch.

Gilchrist said that he isn't surprised that people are attempting to exploit and demean his organization and its name.

But "my ego has become very calloused," he said. "When I started this organization, I expected this kind of abuse. Therefore, I wasn't surprised."

-- *North Country Times*, June 8, 2005

### UK Docs Seek Knife Ban

A team from West Middlesex University Hospital said in the *British Medical Journal* that violent crime is on the increase - and kitchen knives are used in as many as half of all stabbings.

The researchers said there was no reason for long pointed knives to be publicly available at all.

They consulted 10 top chefs from around the UK, and found such knives have little practical value in the kitchen. None of the chefs felt such knives were essential, since the point of a short blade was just as useful when a sharp end was needed.

The researchers said a short pointed knife may cause a substantial superficial wound if used in an assault - but is unlikely to penetrate to inner organs. In contrast, a pointed

long blade pierces the body like "cutting into a ripe melon".

The use of knives is particularly worrying amongst adolescents, say the researchers, reporting that 24% of 16-year-olds have been shown to carry weapons, primarily knives.

The study found links between easy access to domestic knives and violent assault are long established.

French laws in the 17th century decreed that the tips of table and street knives be ground smooth.

A century later, forks and blunt-ended table knives were introduced in the UK in an effort to reduce injuries during arguments in public eating houses.

The researchers say legislation to ban the sale of long pointed knives would be a key step in the fight against violent crime.

A Home Office spokesperson said there were already extensive restrictions in place to control the sale and possession of knives.

"The law already prohibits the possession of offensive weapons in a public place, and the possession of knives in public without good reason or lawful authority, with the exception of a folding pocket knife with a blade not exceeding three inches.

"Offensive weapons are defined as any weapon designed or adapted to cause injury, or intended by the person possessing them to do so.

"An individual has to demonstrate that he had good reason to possess a knife, for example for fishing, other sporting purposes or as part of his profession (e.g. a chef) in a public place.

"The manufacture, sale and importation of 17 bladed, pointed and other offensive weapons have been banned, in addition to flick knives and gravity knives."

A spokesperson for the Association of Chief Police Officers said: "ACPO supports any move to reduce the number of knife related incidents, however, it is important to consider the practicalities of enforcing such changes."

-- BBC News, 26 May 2005

### SOF Combat Assault Rifle Update

HERSTAL, Belgium -- The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has conducted the third critical design review (CDR) for the Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR) with FN Herstal

who was awarded the development contract 5 November 2004.

The SCAR Program is providing the first, truly modular and reliable assault rifle designed and built from the ground up for the finest fighting forces in the world. The CDR was spearheaded by the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane, Indiana, and supported by USSOCOM Operators.

FN Herstal displayed several improvements to the existing platform, including a SCAR version in the 'flat, dark, earth' color, an anodized aluminum upper receiver rail colored in 'flat, dark, earth,' a polymer lower receiver version and a concept model of the 40mm Enhanced Grenade Launcher Module.

As in previous CDRs, FN Herstal provided SCAR rifles in various configurations including a 20" barreled 7.62 SCAR-Heavy (SCAR-H).

Troy Smith, SCAR Program Manager said, "We continue to emphasize the importance of Operator involvement side-by-side with FN Herstal and Operator developers. We continue to improve this weapon through an iterative process. We very much look forward to providing the Operators with the best solutions technology has to offer."

Among the Operator-driven design modifications were a new pistol grip with improved ergonomics, a front sight post with folding and locking options and rear sight adjustments.

The 3rd CDR addressed sniper variant issues, among others.

Plans now call for the production and fielding of the SCAR-H concurrently with the SCAR-Light. Both variants are being developed to provide the flexibility to match the way SOF operations are conducted -- with an increased need for modularity and reliability that reduces maintenance, improves effectiveness, and maximizes the efficiency of weight carried by Operators.

The SCAR will be built at the FN Manufacturing LLC plant in Columbia, SC, which employs approximately 500 people.

FN Manufacturing LLC, is a precision machining manufacturer specializing in the production of small arms. Their products include the M16 rifle, M240 machine gun, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, and the FNP Polymer 49 pistol for military and law enforcement markets.

USSOCOM plans, directs, and executes special operations in the conduct of the War on Terrorism in order to disrupt, defeat, and destroy terrorist networks that threaten the

United States, its citizens and interests worldwide. USSOCOM organizes, trains, and equips special operations forces that are provided to the Geographic Combatant Commanders, American Ambassadors and their country teams.

The Herstal Group, a 2500-person strong corporation, employs nearly 900 people in the United States. The Herstal Group includes Herstal, the parent company and two main subsidiaries: FN Herstal, active in the Defense and Law Enforcement fields, and Browning specializing in hunting and shooting, marksmanship and outdoor sporting goods. The Herstal Group is headquartered in Liege, Belgium.

CONTACT: Jennifer Chait, +1-703-200-6873, +1-703-852-9565, or [jchait@thewexfordgroup.com](mailto:jchait@thewexfordgroup.com), for the U.S. Special Operations Command.

-- Source: U.S. Special Operations Command, June 1, 2005

### Night Landings

The flights almost always land at night--and the wounded are brought off planes in the dark. Kept away from the news cameras, the nightly parade of the injured who arrive at Maryland's Andrews Air Force base from U.S. Army medical facilities in Germany are driven--sometimes in vans or school buses converted into ambulances--to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., the nation's top military hospitals.

These soldiers have gone from the front lines to the back door--brought back to the U.S. under the cover of darkness to keep them hidden from the media and the public.

According to the Pentagon, the soldiers arrive at night because "operational restrictions" at a runway near the military's main hospital in Germany, where the wounded from Iraq are brought first, affect the timing of flights.

But Paul Rieckhoff, founder and executive director of Operation Truth, an advocacy group for veterans

of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, told *Salon* reporter Mark Benjamin that there is a different reason. "They do it so nobody sees [the wounded]," Rieckhoff said. "In their mindset, this is going to demoralize the American people. The overall cost of this war has been...continuously hidden throughout. As the costs get higher, their efforts to conceal those costs also increase."

In late 2003, press accounts reported that medical staff at Walter Reed were working 70- to 80-hour weeks to handle the influx of patients. Overcrowding was so bad, in fact, that a number of the less seriously wounded were sent to stay in hotels near the hospital--transported during the day to Walter Reed for outpatient treatment. The situation is no better today--though it is more hidden than ever because of the media blackout that the Pentagon has tried to throw over Walter Reed.

Ironically, the main reasons for the overflow of seriously injured are improvements in body armor and the use of better medical technology on the battlefield. Because of this, many soldiers today are surviving with more severe injuries than in previous wars.

According to Pentagon statistics, approximately 6 percent of the more than 12,000 troops wounded by bombs or bullets in Iraq or Afghanistan have required amputation--three times the rate in Vietnam. About 20 percent have head or neck injuries, and many more have suffered breathing and eating impairments, blindness or severe disfiguration. Dr. Roy Aaron of Brown Medical School in Rhode Island told the *Boston Globe* in December that the Veterans Affairs system "literally cannot handle the load" of amputees.

A recent *USA Today* report found that between January 2003 and January 2005, more than 400 cases of traumatic brain injury--usually the result of a bomb or rocket attack--were diagnosed among wounded soldiers at Walter Reed alone. Slightly more than half of those were left with some form of permanent brain damage.

Reporter Mark Benjamin

interviewed 14 soldiers receiving psychiatric treatment at Walter Reed over the course of a year. His conclusion: "[T]he Army's top hospital is failing to properly care for many soldiers traumatized by the Iraq war."

According to Benjamin, therapy is mostly administered by "a rotating cast of medical students and residents, not full-fledged doctors or veterans," with a heavy reliance on medication. Even more troubling, however, is that the Army seems bent on denying that the stress of war caused the soldiers' mental trauma.

"When you get [to Walter Reed], they analyze you, break you down and try to find anything wrong with you before you got in [the Army]," Spc. Josh Sanders told Benjamin. "They started asking me questions about my mom and my dad getting divorced. That was the last thing on my mind when I'm thinking about people getting fragged and burned bodies being pulled out of vehicles. They asked me if I missed my wife. Well, yeah, I missed my wife. That is not the problem here. Did you ever put your foot through a 5-year-old's skull?"

As of March, of the 244,054 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan discharged from service, more than 12,000 had been in VA counseling centers for readjustment problems and symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. According to a report from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan "will produce a new generation of veterans at risk for the chronic mental health problems that result, in part, from exposure to the stress, adversity and trauma of war-zone experiences."

But if the experience of soldiers at Walter Reed is any indication, the U.S. government will turn its back on this newest generation of battle-scarred veterans--just as it did with soldiers returning from Vietnam.

-- Nicole Colson, counterpunch June 6, 2005

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